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THE
COLONIAL VIRGINIAN.

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

Geographical and Historical Society

OF

RICHMOND COLLEGE,

OCTOBER 13, 1891,

BY

R. A. BROCK,

Secretary of the Virginia and of the Southern Historical Societies.

RICHMOND, VA.:

WM. ELLIS JONES, BOOK AND JOB PRINTER.

1891.

ADDRESS.

Mr. President, Ladies, and Gentlemen :

The Geographical and Historical Society of Richmond College, at whose bidding I have the honor to be here, was happy, I trust, in the choice of its designation. **1681133**

It should be potential in its range of possibilities. It follows, emulously it seems, other Virginian precursors of enlightenment.

The original title of a dignified body, which I have for years striven to serve, was the Virginia Historical and Philosophical Society. It was organized December 29, 1831, with Chief-Justice Marshall as its first president. It is honored now in a triumvirate of directive officers, whom Richmond values for their excellences. The second of these is your own loved president, the chief herald of the cause of education in our teeming republic. The Hon. William Wirt Henry and Colonel Archer Anderson hold the first and third trusts. Since 1870 the essential exponent of our State has been known more simply as the Virginia Historical Society, having relegated then philosophy to the dreamer. It had a predecessor in imposing name more than half a century before—the Philosophical Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge—instituted at the ambrosial capital of the Old Dominion—Williamsburg—in the month of flowers—May, 1773. I may recur to it again. Does not history repeat itself? A Virginian proclivity is reasserted in the name of your promising society. Constituted as you are of representatives of quite every county of our own State, and of many of the southern sisterhood ; bouyed with the infectious ardor and activity of youth, why should we not in the results of your devotion hope for a golden fruition in your co-operative and inspiring investigations ?

Devoutly, may the Geographical and Historical Society, in unlimited usefulness, endure as a feature of this beneficent institution, the providence and zeal of whose faculty called it into being !

Virginia has not been unmixedly blessed in the offices of her analyst and historian. Doughty John Smith, whilst in the enamored

description that "Heaven and earth seemed never to have agreed better to frame a place for man's commodious and delightful habitation," offers sweet¹ pabulum to our regard for our generous mother, is yet most unlovely in his virulent denunciation of his fellow colonists. Whatever his merit, it is not easy to forget some peculiar traits of his.

From adventurous John, along the cycle of Virginia's being, have the children of her own womb bared her bosom to the shaft of the detractor.

The invitation to address you was a surprise to me. In casting about for a subject I at first thought to utilize some notes I had gathered as to the provision for education made by our forefathers, but that dutiful office has been most happily anticipated in the elaborate address of Mr. Wyndham R. Meredith on "Colonial Culture in Virginia," delivered before the literary societies of William and Mary College, July 1st last. I am told that its publication in durable form is designed. It is eminently worthy of your consideration. There is another presentation that I would commend to you in its interest and in the attractive views it unfolds—the eloquent address of Dr. Thomas Nelson Page before the literary societies of Emory and Henry College, June 10th last, on "The Social Life of Old Virginia."

In serving you this evening mine shall be but a modest effort. I shall endeavor simply to add a few lights to the delineations of the gentlemen cited. If aught that I offer as to the Virginian character may prove suggestive to you I shall be sincerely gratified.

One whose labors in behalf of American history are valuable, confesses his "perplexity"² as to the sources of Virginian ability, and cites a prominent Virginian educator³ as an authority in his mystification. Withal, he makes the somewhat singular admission that "the product was here, for the number of educated Virginians was large as compared with such persons in other colonies; but the machinery appeared to be wanting, and in a country people with men of high culture (for that time) and of great political knowledge and experience the educational factor can hardly be traced. * * *

¹ *General Historie*, page 114.

² Worthington C. Ford, "Education in Colonial Virginia," *The Nation*, November 6, 1890.

³ "Virginia Schools Before and After the Revolution," an address before the alumni of the University of Virginia, June 27, 1888, by W. Gordon McCabe.

The fact remains, however, that the list of Revolutionary leaders in Congress and State politics from 1765 to 1799 would be very much less in number and importance were the Virginians to be stricken from it." To him who would believe, there should be little cause for marvel.

Whatever may have been the general interest of the English nation in colonizing Virginia, the fact should not be ignored that in the first charter of King James to the Virginia Company "their desires" in the "propagating of the Christian religion" has signal acknowledgment.

This pious object is noted in the third and last charter. Was there no earnestness in reiterated desire? It is admitted by Neill, who is constantly cited as an arch-detractor of the glories of "Ould Virginia," that the Virginia Company were the first to take steps relative to the establishment of schools in the English colonies of America.⁴ It is not only ungenerous, but disingenuous to urge that the results of the desire for the civilizing and Christianizing of the natives ended substantially with the blight of the college at Henricopolis by the Indian massacre of March 22, 1622. The conversion of the "gentle Pocahontas" can scarcely be regarded as unimportant fruit. The Indians, like those of our own day, were perverse pupils. Nevertheless, efforts for their enlightenment did not cease. The Brafterton school at William and Mary College, endowed by the Hon. Robert Boyle in 1691, it is noted by an English traveller, exercised its useful offices in 1759,⁵ and it is believed they were continued until the period of the Revolution. Governor Spotswood, in 1711, desiring to increase the facilities for the education of the Indians, recommended to the Assembly an annual appropriation for the purpose.⁶ That the companions of John Smith were not as graceless as he would stigmatize them as being, it is in evidence that they held religious observances in regard.

Their piety and reverence are instanced both by Smith and Wingfield. In Bagnall's narrative in the "Historie" of the first⁷ it is

⁴*The History of Education in Virginia During the Seventeenth Century*, 1867, page 3.

⁵Travels of Rev. Andrew Burnaby, *Virginia Historical Register*, Volume III, page 87.

⁶Spotswood Letters, Volume I, page 123. *Virginia Historical Collections*, new series, Volume I.

⁷*General Historie*, pages 55-65.

noted that "order was daily to haue prayer with a Psalme"; and Wingfield notes that when their store of liquors was reduced to two gallons each of "sack" and "aqua vitæ," the first was "reserued for the communion-table."⁸ The Virginia Assembly which met at Jamestown, July 30, 1619, the first representative legislative body convened in America, enjoined the religious instruction of the natives. It also enacted that "all persons whatsoever upon the Sabbath days shall frequent divine service and sermons both forenoon and afternoon."⁹

Drunkenness, gaming and blasphemy were rigorously punished.

The requirement of church attendance, the interdiction of travelling on the Sabbath, and the punishment of various indulgences and immoralities were continued in enactments of increasing severity, and these statutes remained in the Code without modification until the period of the American Revolution, as *Hening's Statutes* verify. Religious liberty is a priceless boon.

The Established Church in Virginia has been arraigned for the persecution of those differing from them in religious tenets.

The Cavaliers of Virginia and the Puritans of New England agreed in thinking religion an essential part of the State. Between the two, in characteristic elements, there was unavoidable antagonism.

It would be more pleasant and charitable to regard our ancestors as not implacably intolerant.

It is not to be forgotten that the parish levies were largely disbursed in the expenses of local government and the support of the poor and helpless.

The historian Beverley states that "liberty of conscience is given to all other congregations pretending to Christianity, on condition that they submit to the parish dues."¹⁰ In 1705 the French Protestant Refugees at Manakin-Town, were exempted from the "payment of all publick and county levies," and the "allowance settled by law for a minister's maintainance," was enacted *not* to be construed as to the minister of said parish of King William, but that the inhabitants be left at their own liberty to agree with and pay their minister as their circumstances will admit."¹¹ In 1730, the German Protestants at

⁸ Wingfield's Narrative, quoted by Anderson in his "*History of the Church of England in the Colonies*," Volume I, page 77.

⁹ *Colonial Records of Virginia* (Senate Document, 1874), pages 20-27-28.

¹⁰ *Beverley's History of Virginia*, page 226.

¹¹ *Hening's Statutes*, Volume III, page 478.

Germana, in Stafford county, were exempted from the payment of parish levies.¹² There is basis for the belief that the persecution of the Quakers was never inexorable, and that their religious meetings were allowed from the period of their first seating in the colony. In 1663 John Porter, a member of the House of Burgesses, from Lower Norfolk county, was arraigned before the House for being "loving to the Quakers," and being "at their meetings." He was also charged with being "so far an Anabaptist as to be against the baptizing of children."¹³ I recall among the treasures of the very interesting museum of this college a precious relic, a brick from the Chesterfield jail, a votive shrine of religious liberty, as the prison of Baptist apostles. Foote, the Presbyterian historian, asserts that under the provisions of the Act of Toleration—first William and Mary, 1689—the minister, Francis Makemie (who was also a merchant), was the first Dissenter licensed to hold meetings in Virginia, the date being October, 1699, and the places his three houses at Pocomoke, Accomack town, and Onancock.¹⁴

It is well known that the Quakers were quite numerous in Nansemond, Norfolk, and Isle of Wight counties about the middle of the seventeenth century.

John Pleasants, the ancestor of the worthy family of the name in this country, emigrated from Norwich, England, to Virginia in 1665, and settled in Henrico county in 1668. In the records of the county, of date October 1, 1692, appears the following:

"John Pleasants, in behalf of himself and other Quakers, did this day, in open court, p'sent ye following Acc't of ye Quaker places of public meeting in this county, viz.: Att our Public Meeting House. ¶ Thomas Holmes [presumed to be the minister]; Att Mary Maddox's, a monthly meeting; Att John Pleasants'. These are directed to be committed to record as the Act of Parliament enjoins, they being the places of public worship.

¶ John Pleasants, Henry Randolph, C. C.¹⁵

The Record-Book of the Henrico meetings of the Society of Friends from 1699 to 1746 is preserved.

At a monthly meeting of the Society of Friends held March 3, 1700, it was agreed with John Pleasants to build a *new* meeting-house

¹² *Ibid.*, Volume IV, page 306.

¹³ *Henning*, Volume II, page 199.

¹⁴ *Foote's Sketches*, first series, pages 51-52.

¹⁵ *Record-Book Henrico County*, page 352.

30x70 feet in dimensions *instead of repairing the old one.* A just inference is that the old structure was so ruinous through age that it had to be replaced with a new one.

It may be of interest to note that the ancestors of the lamented Henry K. Ellyson, the late honored president of the Board of Trustees of this college, were members of the Henrico Meeting of Friends. If there was not an earlier house of worship of the Quakers in Norfolk, Nansemond, or Isle of Wight counties, with some it might be held that in this early licensed meeting-house in Henrico county rests the honor of the germ of Religious Liberty in Virginia.

Sweet charity! how waywardly thy behests are sometimes misinterpreted.

It is to be deplored that the zeal of some itinerants betrayed them into unseemly utterances. It would be a rare Christian, indeed, who would be pleased with a characterization such as this: "At church ye pray to the devil—your good works damn you and carry you to hell. All your preachers preach false doctrines, and they and all who follow them are going to hell." Is it to be wondered that religious people thus abused felt aggrieved? Were these ancestors of ours besotted bigots?

We have still, it is said, "Unrest of Christendom." The Presbyterian Synod, in session in Philadelphia May 27, 1745, deemed it proper in an address to Governor Gooch, of Virginia, to disclaim countenance of such provocations, and ascribed them to schismatic who had been excluded the Synod in 1741.¹⁶

Happily there have been modifications in Christian exemplification throughout our land since our colonial era. I have no sectarian interest in this discussion. New Englanders are among my kindest and most cherished friends. In their regard for literature we might profitably emulate them.

The loving and gentle Bishop Meade of blessed memory, in the mortification of pious humility, perchance, thought proper in that precious garner of the past, "*The Old Churches and Families of Virginia*," to record the frailties of some of the colonial clergy. I doubt if there were a half score of such weak and erring spirits—certainly not so many are cited, and a single black sheep has given a bad name to an entire flock—yet a "Virginian and an Episcopalian" has recently taken license to assert sweepingly that "a more disrepu-

¹⁶ Foote, pages 137-139.

table class of men than the early Virginia parsons it would be difficult to imagine."

¹⁷ The indulgences of the Virginian of the eighteenth century were not peculiar to him alone. They largely prevailed in New England. They were the natural reflex of the laxity of English morals under the Georges.

However liable the Virginian may have been to the charge of intolerance, superstition seems not to have benighted his nature. His courts record but one instance of an arraignment for witchcraft. Upon the complaint of one Luke Hill and wife in 1795 Grace Sherwood was tried by the County Court of Princess Anne "on the suspicion of witchcraft." She was first searched by an able jury of "ancient women" and then subjected to the water test—being cast into the river and "she swimming w'n therein and bound, contrary to custom," was again committed to ye common goal of ye county to be brought to a ffuture tryall there."¹⁸

The court, however, "not knowing how to proceed to judgm't," referred the case to the Supreme Court, the Council, for decision. The Council in like perplexity referred it to the Attorney-General, Stevens Thomson. He gave it as his "opinion that the County C't should have made a fuller examination."¹⁹

The persecution of the alleged witch it may be concluded ended with this opinion, as there is no further record of the case. She survived, it appears, until 1741, her will, in which she bequeaths her estate to three sons, being of record in that year in Princess Anne county.²⁰ It is significant that the forewoman of the able jury was Eliza Barnes, from Anne Arundel county, Md., which was the harbor of the Puritans.

The constitution of the population of Virginia in the seventeenth century—the race elements that entered into its composition—may be noted. It is conclusively demonstrated in preserved record, printed and MS., the latter embracing the registry of lands patents from 1620 and the records of the several county courts, that the settlers were preponderantly English. There was a considerable number of the Welsh and a sprinkling of French, Italians, Irish,

¹⁷ McCabe, page 9.

¹⁸ *Collections of the Virginia Historical and Philosophical Society*, Volume I, 1833, pages 69-78.

¹⁹ *Calendar of Virginia State Papers*, Volume I, page 100.

²⁰ Letter from A. E. Kellam, clerk of Princess Anne county, August 30, 1891.

and Dutch. Among the last were skilled artisans, and one of that race—one Doodas or Doodes Minor, or Minor Doodes, for the name is thus variably recorded—was the ancestor of a family of eminent educators.²¹

Welsh blood has been among the motive powers of many eminent sons of Virginia, and of their descendants in the South. Various biographers claim that Jefferson Davis was of this descent, and the immigrant ancestor of Thomas Jefferson, it is known, was a native of Wales. Although it has been claimed that he was of Scotch-Irish blood, yet not a single ancestor of his was of either strain.

There were refugee Huguenots who found asylum desultorily in Virginia before 1700, but the chief influx was in that year, when more than 500 came and settled, chiefly at Manakintown. The virtue of this infusion is manifest in the names of Dupuy, Fontaine, Marye, Maury, Micou, Michaux, and others, quite concluding the alphabet with Venable and Youille, many of them being numerously represented among us.

Of the Scotch, but few immigrants before the union of Scotland with England, in 1707, may be identified. William Drummond, who had been Governor of North Carolina, and who was hung by Berkeley in 1676 as a rebel, is said to have been a Scotchman. The founder of the distinguished Nelson family was called, it may be significantly, "Scotch Tom," but he was born in Cumberland county, England. Dr. James Blair was a Scotchman, but he came to Virginia through the alembic of England as the famous race of the Valley of Virginia, whose brains and brawn have so impressed them upon the history of our country, did through that of Ireland, following, in 1734, from Pennsylvania, the Dutch leader, Joist Hite, who came in 1732. After the union, "Scotch Parsons," so potent as educators, and merchants, who quite monopolized the trade of the country, pervaded Eastern Virginia.

Some writers seem to delight in the assertion that Virginians are largely the descendants of felons—vile criminals. The chief authority for the charge—"Hotten's List of Emigrants to America, 1600-1700"—comprehends, according to the title page, "Persons of Quality, Emigrants, Religious Exiles, Political Exiles, Serving-Men sold for a period of years, Apprentices, Children stolen, Maidens pressed, and Others." These lists include shipments to the West India Islands and to New England, as well as Virginia. Although the latter des-

²¹ The Minor family.

tion was at the period deemed quite a general one south of New England, there are more lists ostensibly for New England than Virginia. The lists themselves seem to offer no more foundation for the stigmatizing term convict than in some instances that they were "rebels" or political offenders. Dishonor can scarcely be held to attach to such. The magnanimous New Englander would vouchsafe us all of the felons as he would the entire depravity of man.

The following descriptive prefix to the lists given constantly appears in evidence of character as Christians and law-abiding persons: "They have been examined by the minister of — of their conformance, and have taken the oaths of allegiance and supremacy." The severity of the penal laws of England makes it patent for what trivial causes the stigma "felon" or "convict" was adjudged and affixed. "It is a melancholy truth [laments Blackstone] that among the variety of actions which men are daily liable to commit no less than one hundred and sixty have been declared by an act of Parliament to be felonies without the benefit of the clergy, or, in other words, to be worthy of instant death."²²

All persons guilty of larceny above the value of twelve pence were by the common law subject to the death penalty.²³ It would appear that the transportation of felons to America was first authorized by Parliament in 1663, when an act was passed sending hither the "Morse Troopers of Cumberland and Northumberland."²⁴

The presence of these Puritans in Virginia was speedily felt. An insurrection among the white servants of the colony in September, 1663, led, states Beverley, by Oliverian soldiers,"²⁵ gave so great an alarm that measures were taken by vigorous enactment to "prohibit the importation of such dangerous and scandalous people, since thereby we apparently lose our reputation."²⁶ In 1671 Captains Bristow and Walker were made to give security in the "some of 1,000,000 pounds of tobacco and cask" that certain "Newgate birds" be sent out of the colony within two months.²⁷

Smith, in his "*Historie*," gives evidence largely as to the character and social condition of the early settlers of Virginia, and the colony

²² *Tucker's Blackstone*, Volume IV, page 18.

²³ *Tucker*, Volume IV, page 236.

²⁴ *Blackstone*, Philadelphia Edition, 1841, Volume I, side note 18, page 137.

²⁵ *Beverley*, pages 5-8.

²⁶ *Hening*, Volume II, page 510.

²⁷ *Ibid*, page 511.

was constantly thereafter a favored asylum for many of gentle birth during the civil wars of England.

Whilst I heartily endorse the just sentiment of the poet laureate:

'Tis only noble to be good!
Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood!

Yet it is true that according to one test there is more evidence preserved of gentle lineage in Virginia than in any other of the original American colonies. The list of families in the colony who, in vested right, used coat-armor, as attested in examples of such use on tomb-stones, preserved book-plates and impressions of seals, is more than one hundred and fifty. The virtue of such family investment by royal favor may appear somewhat in the fact that the Virginian rebels, Claiborne, Bacon, Washington and Lee, were all armigers, and among others were the Amblers, Archers, Armisteads, Banisters, Barradalls, Beverleys, Blands, Bollings, Byrds, Carys, Carringtons, Cloptons, Claytons, Corbins, and so throughout the alphabet in swelling numbers and comprehensive examples of ability and worth.

More than a score of knights and baronets had residence in the colony from time to time, and the descendants of the Diggeses, Fairfaxes, Peytons, Skipwiths and others, are among us still.

Heraldry may yet be one of the studies taught in the law schools. It has its material uses in determining succession and inheritance. It is beginning to have one largely ostentatious in republican America. The study has also its incidental charms, as has another. The Bible abounds in pedigrees. They are held to be essential in determining the qualities of animals. Genealogy is now admitted to be one of the chief supports of history.

An American-born genealogist, the late Joseph Lemuel Chester, in recognition of the value of his labors, had conferred on him by two continents the degrees most highly regarded in each—LL. D., from Columbia College, America, and D. C. L. from Oxford, England. He was my friend and correspondent for years. He wrote me some time before his death: "I cannot die content until I have settled the ancestry of George Washington." Alas! this satisfaction was reserved for another—Henry F. Waters. Young gentlemen, I may suggest to you an allurements in genealogy.

It appears to be the acme of the desire of the American woman of the present day to fix her title as a Colonial Dame or a Daughter of the American Revolution. Assist her by your talents, and your happiness may be fixed for life. I should not doubt but that the best

interests of Alliance would thus be solved. In striking confirmation of the old saw that "Blood will tell," a worthy, enterprising and intelligent Virginia settler of the seventeenth century was the ancestor in common of three of the most eminent men that America has produced in quite a century and a half. William Randolph, of "Turkey Island," was the grandfather, in varying degrees, of Thomas Jefferson, John Marshall and Robert Edward Lee. This may be accounted by the enthusiastic disciple of Galton as a confirmation in three-fold exemplification of the law of heredity when it is recalled that William Randolph was of that resolution of character that brooked not obstacle; that he was county lieutenant—by title colonel, and by authority commander-in-chief of the county in which he resided—this—Henrico; that he served in turn as clerk of the county and as its presiding magistrate; as clerk and as a member of the House of Burgesses, and as a member of the Colonial Council, sometimes termed the King's Council—the elect of those of the highest social worth in the Colony and its highest judicial tribunal.

The institution of slavery (which with us has been attended with its penalties as well as with its profits, may-hap), inaugurated fortuitously and fostered and fixed in the greed of Old England and of New England, was one, whatever its alleged enormity, highly providential in its effects. With the master, regard and solicitude for the welfare of the inherited servitor—companion of his youth and habitual ministrant of his comfort—was inseparable, and the reflection of such possession carried with it a sense of superiority as well as of responsibility. The beneficence of the relation with the slave has been pithily epitomized by a distinguished Virginian:²⁸

"Had the African been left, like the Indian, in his native freedom, his would have been the fate of the Indian. But in the mysterious providence of God, the African was 'bound to the car of the Anglo-American,' who has borne him along with him in his upward career, protecting his weakness and providing for his wants. Accordingly, he has grown with our growth and strengthened with our strength, until he is numbered by millions instead of scores. In the meantime, the black man has been trained in the habits, manners, and arts of civilized life; been taught the Christian religion, and been gradually rising in the intellectual and moral order, until he is far above his race in their native seats."

In these facts we see traces of an all-wise Providence in permitting

²⁸ Henry A. Wise.

the black man to be brought here and subjected to the discipline of slavery, tempered by Christianity and regulated by law. Verily, if there had been no other end of such a procedure this seeming sharp Providence of God would have been highly justified. AFRICA GAVE VIRGINIA A SAVAGE AND A SLAVE—VIRGINIA GIVES BACK TO AFRICA A CITIZEN AND A CHRISTIAN!²⁹

It is encouraging to know that a prominent negro, the Methodist Bishop Turner, accepts this just conclusion. In an address delivered recently in Baltimore, he said: "I believe that Providence sanctioned slavery for a time in order to bring the negro in contact with the white race that he might absorb the white man's Christianity and civilization and [he added what is of infinite moment to the races] *return to Africa and civilize his brethren there.*"

What a truly grand destiny this would be for the "Afro-American."

The Virginian planter was essentially a transplanted Englishman in tastes and convictions, and emulated the amenities and the culture of the mother country. The ease with which wealth was acquired, in planting, fostered the habits of personal indulgence and generous expenditure into which he was led by hereditary characteristics.³⁰

Hardy sports and habitual exercise in the saddle intensified his self-reliance and instinct of command.

From the meeting of the first Assembly, in 1619, the colonists enjoyed all the privileges of Englishmen. They were loyal to the Crown. The inconveniences arising from their distance from the throne were counterbalanced by advantages resulting from the same distance and their wilderness home. The King could raise a revenue only through the House of Burgesses. They were ever jealous of infractions of their rights. To stimulate individual energy and extend individual liberty was paramently their aim. A representative government having been established, domestic organization and policy were soon moulded to meet substantially the wants of the people. Article VIII of the Assembly of 1623-'24,³¹ declares that "the Governor shall not lay any taxes or ympositions upon the colony,

²⁹ *Slaughter's History of African Colonization*, cited in "Virginia in Her Past Relation to Slavery," *Virginia Historical Collections*, Volume VI, pages 35-36.

³⁰ "They live in the same neat Manner, dress after the same Modes, and behave themselves exactly as the *Gentry in London*; most Families of any Note having a *Coach, Chariot, Bertin or Chaise.*" Hugh Jones' *Present State of Virginia*, 1724, page 32.

³¹ Henning, volume I., page 124.

their lands or commodities other way than by the authority of the General Assembly, to be levied and ymployed as the said Assembly shall appoynt." In 1642 they declared "freedom of trade to be the blood and life of a community."³²

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The cumulus of political grievance in 1676 was stoutly met by what in history has been termed Bacon's Rebellion. In 1718 the payment of a penny-a-letter postage on letters from England was resisted on the ground that Parliament could not levy a tax here without the consent of the General Assembly, which body wrote Governor Spotswood, to the Lords of Trade, rendered the imposition inoperative by declaring the postmaster "in no ways lyable by the Act of Parliament," and by laying a penalty of £5 on him for every letter "he demands or takes from a Board any ship." The appointing of stages was also interdicted by onerous penalties.³³

Thus was the prime resistance of Virginia to the Stamp Act heralded. You are familiar with the exemplification of Virginians in the struggles for independence. They are admitted to be whole-souled rebels.

It is an old subject of complaint that Virginians devoted themselves too exclusively to agricultural and individual enterprises. The history of our colonial legislation is replete with acts to encourage the establishment of towns. To Virginia belongs the honor of inaugurating the manufacture of iron in America. In 1619, on Falling creek, a tributary of James river, Chesterfield county, about seven miles below the present city of Manchester, works for smelting iron were erected. The Indian massacre of 1622 unfortunately terminated the enterprise. There were early efforts for the cultivation of flax and hemp, and the breeding of silk-worms for the manufacture of fabrics. In 1657 premiums were offered for the production of silk, flax, and other staple commodities.³⁴

Mr. Meredith, whose able address I have referred to, conclusively refutes the charge of illiteracy and disregard for education in our ancestors. My limits, with the comprehensive view I have essayed, will allow me only opportunity for the statement of some facts in augmentation of his valuable presentation.

My own examination of various records of Virginia, incidental to historical research, has proven to me that the general educational attainments of the Virginia colonists, from the earliest period, com-

³² *Ibid.*, page 223.

³³ *Spotswood Letters*, Volume II, page 280.

³⁴ *Hening*, Volume I, page 169.

pared favorably with such average acquirements in Old England or New England. My friend, President Tyler, of William and Mary College, who has carefully examined the records of York county from 1645, informs me that they sustain this conclusion. He found, however, at the conclusion of the seventeenth century evidences of a marked improvement in education and in material circumstances. Possessions were more valuable, and included many concomitants of comfort and refinement. Mr. Meredith proves from the marriage bonds recorded in Norfolk county from 1750 to 1761, that ninety-four per cent. of its inhabitants could write.

Indentured servants and others, who by service, usually for three years, repaid the costs advanced for their transportation (hence the term transport), were employed from an early period. Many of such servants were persons of education, who by vicissitude of fortune had fallen into poverty. I published from the original in the *Richmond Standard*, November 16, 1878, an indenture dated July 1, 1628, binding one John Logwood to service for four years to Edward Hurd, in Virginia. This document is witnessed by excellent signatures of two servants of Hurd. Such educated servants were constantly employed as tutors in the families of the planters. The fact is noted by a traveller in 1746, who writes of the Virginians: Those that can't afford to send their children to the better schools send them to the country schoolmaster. * * * * Often a clever servant * is indentured to some planter * * as a schoolmaster.³⁵

In 1649 there were twenty churches in Virginia, with ministers to each. There were also, besides other schools, a free school in Elizabeth City county amply endowed by bequest of Benjamin Symes in 1634—the first legacy for such purpose made by a resident of the American plantations.³⁶

Other free schools followed in the benefactions of Virginia planters—in Gloucester county in 1675, founded by Henry Peasley; in Yorktown in 1691, by Governor Francis Nicholson;³⁷ in Westmoreland in 1700, by William Horton; in Accomac in 1710, by Samuel Sanford; in Elizabeth City in 1730, by Thomas Eaton. In 1700 there

³⁵ Extracts from "Itinerant Observations in America"—*London Magazine*, 1746. Published in the *Richmond Standard*, September 7, 14, 21, 1878.

³⁶ *A Perfect Description of Virginia*, 1649, page 15. *Force's Tracts*, Volume II.

³⁷ Of this school Robert Leightonhouse, who died in 1701, was the first teacher. The school-house was standing in Yorktown at the beginning of our late war.

were five schools in Henrico county. Beverley, writing about the same period, states: "There are large tracts of land, houses, and other things granted to free schools in many parts of the county, and some of them are so large that of themselves they are a handsome maintenance for a master. * * In all other places where such endowments have not already been made, the people join and build schools for the children."³⁸

In 1724, in the replies to the Bishop of London made by the rectors of the several parishes as to the number of endowed schools in Virginia, it appears that there were as many as four schools in many parishes, in some of which Latin and Greek were taught.³⁹ McCabe, among the sources of education in the Colony, cites the "Parsons' Schools"; that of Rev. Devereux Jarratt, in Fluvanna county; the classical school of Rev. John Todd, in Louisa, in 1750; Augusta Academy, in Rockbridge, in 1774—the germ of the present Washington and Lee University; Prince Edward Academy, in 1776—now Hampden-Sidney College; Washington-Henry Academy, in Hanover, founded a few years later by John D. Blair—the "Parson Blair," of Richmond, of revered memory; the schools of Rev. Archibald Campbell and Thomas Martin (the latter of whom prepared James Madison for Princeton College) in Richmond county; of Rev. James Maury, in Orange (the preceptor of Jefferson and many eminent Virginians); of Donald Robertson, of King and Queen.⁴⁰ I may add Rev. William Douglas, who taught in Goochland and Albemarle counties, and said to have been an early preceptor of Jefferson, and the classical school at "Wingfield," in Hanover county; of Rev. Peter Nelson, an alumnus of William and Mary College, who died a minister of the Baptist Church. Many eminent men of Virginia and the Southern States were educated by him. In 1751 a labor school was established in Talbott county, Md., chiefly by the contributions of Virginians, and in which were fed, clothed, lodged, and taught poor children." The providence of the parish system is indicated in the appointed duty of the vestrymen in binding out pauper children, to require by contract that they should have three years' schooling. This practice is attested by the vestry records of various parishes. It cannot be questioned that many sons of wealthy planters enjoyed the advantages of English and Scotch Universities

³⁸ *Beverley*, page 230.

³⁹ *Perry's Church Papers of Virginia*, pages 261-318.

⁴⁰ *Virginia Schools*, etc.

and the schools of Oxford and Cambridge, Eton, Harrow, Winchester, Wakefield, Yorkshire, of Edinburgh and Glasgow, and of the Merchants' Taylors' School.

It may be realized that in the prosperity attending the Virginia planter at the close of the seventeenth century, the most enlightening influences followed. The eighteenth century began with an era of expanding intelligence, increasing refinement and luxurious expenditure. The sons, returning from the schools, colleges and inns of the law courts of the mother country, invested with the advantages thus acquired and with perceptions quickened by social contact, golden in its intellectual aspirations, were naturally directive in lofty and broad impulse. The influence of Addison, Steele, Pope, Swift, Congreve, Burke and others was nobly fruitful.

In America the excellent offices of the University of Pennsylvania, of Princeton, Harvard, and Yale were availed of. Our women, ever the sweetest and noblest of their sex, it is realized, were effective factors in the formation of Virginian character. It is notable that George Wythe was taught Latin and Greek by his mother, and the brilliant John Randolph "of Roanoke" acknowledged his indebtedness to the same tender regard. It has been ever patent that the most precious accomplishments have continued with the daughters of Virginia. The learned professions were well represented in Virginia. In medicine Dr. Thomas Wootton was the pioneer in 1607. Drs. Walter Russell and Anthony Bagnall were here in 1608, Dr. Lawrence Bohun in 1611, and Dr. John Pott in 1624.⁴¹ The last was Governor of the colony in 1628. There was no deficiency onward of such ministrants. I find "Chirurgion" John Brock, with others, in 1640, and a little later Drs. Daniel Parke, Robert Ellison, Francis Haddon, and Patrick Napier, in York county.

Dr. John Mitchell, F. R. S., eminent, as a botanist as well as physician, located in Middlesex in 1700. Another alike doubly distinguished in science was John Clayton, son of the Attorney-General of the same name, and who settled in Gloucester in 1706.

John Tennent, Sr. and Jr., of Spotsylvania, the former of whom made valuable contributions to medical literature.

Dr. William Cabell, who had been a surgeon in the British navy, and was the founder of the distinguished family of his name. Dr. John Baynham, of Caroline, and Dr. William Baynham, of Essex county.

⁴¹ *Contributions to the Annals of Medical Progress in the United States*, Joseph M. Toner, M. D., Washington, 1874.

The heroic General Hugh Mercer, who fell at Princeton in 1777, and our own Richmond pioneers, James McClurg and William Foushee, both of whom rendered excellent service in the Revolution.

I may mention also Ephriam McDowell, son of James McDowell, of Rockbridge county, who was the first surgeon on record to successfully perform, in Kentucky, in 1809, the operation for extirpation of the ovary.

The list of Virginia-born physicians graduated from Edinburgh and Glasg w is a lengthy one. The earliest in preserved record were Theodrick Bland, in 1763; Arthur Lee, 1764, and Corbin Griffin, 1765. Among the subsequent names were those of McClurg, Campbell, Walker, Ball, Boush, Lyons, Gilliam, Smith, Field, Lewis, McCaw, Minor, Berkeley, Corbin, Brockenbrough, Adams, Greenhow, Archer, Dabney, Banister, and others, endeared to us in the offices of their descendants.

Nor was there deficiency in lights of the law. It may be presumed, however, that their presence would not have aided in pacifying turbulence among the early colonists.

Some names were impressed on the annals of Virginia in the latter part of the seventeenth century. Among them I may mention Robert Beverley, Secretary of the Colony and father of the historian; William Fitzhugh, the ancestor of those of the name in the South; Edmund Jenings, Launcelot Bathurst, Maximilian Boush, Maximilian Robinson, William Robertson, Secretary of the Council, and William Byrd (the second of the name), of varied useful and accomplished exemplification, who was a member of the Inner Temple as well as a fellow of the Royal Society.

Early in the eighteenth century we have Sir John Randolph, of the Inner Temple and Gray's Inn, John Holloway, William Hopkins⁴² John Clayton, Godfrey Pole, Joseph Bickley, Philip Herbert, James and Jack Power, Edward Barradall, Stevens Thomson, and John Mercer, the last the founder of a distinguished family, the compiler of an Abridgement of the Laws of Virginia, a cogent writer, and an accomplished botanist. With the luminous names of Bland, Wythe, Nicholas, Henry, Robinson, Lee, Waller, Randolph, Pendleton, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, Wayles, Page, Corbin, Lyons, Tazewell, Tucker, Cary, Mason, Curle, Ronald, Harrison, and others in succeeding eras you are familiar.

⁴² For sketches of them see *Virginia Historical Register*, Volume I, pages 119-123.

Books were a concomitant in the houses of the planter from an early period. I have met with many memorials from Virginia libraries of the seventeenth century in auction sales in Richmond—waifs that have been transmitted in successive ownership. I have in reverential sentiment garnered many of them in my personal library. In the early decades of the eighteenth century libraries, comprehensive in subject and extensive for the period, became quite numerous in the colony.

Catalogues of the libraries of Colonel William Byrd, of "Westover," the second of the name, and of John Mercer, of "Marlboro," are in my possession. The first, the formation of which was commenced by the immigrant William Byrd, and augmented by his more famous son, enumerates three thousand six hundred and twenty-five volumes, in size from duodecimo to folio. The library of John Mercer comprised one thousand five hundred volumes, of which about one-third were law-books. The libraries of Sir John Randolph, George Mason, William Beverley, John Herbert, William Smith, Gabriel Jones, Ralph Wormley, and others, were also extensive.

I have referred to the Philosophical Society, organized in 1773, with one hundred members. Its first president was John Clayton, author of the "*Flora Virginianica*," published in 1739. Its treasurer was David Jameson, long a member and for a time president of the Council. The second president of the society was John Page, an able and accomplished man, subsequently Governor of Virginia. He was an early contributor to the transactions of the American Philosophical Society. Both he and Jameson were fond of astronomy. I possess a letter, which I have mislaid, written by Jameson to Page in, I think, 1781, noting his observations of some astronomical phenomena, and jotted on the same sheet are the observations of Page himself of the same manifestations. The society of propitious title, whose offices were suspended by the American Revolution, has left a tangible memorial. In the cabinet of the Virginia Historical Society is an engraved gold medal awarded John Hobday in 1774 for the model of a machine for threshing wheat. I would not have you forget John Banister, the eminent naturalist, who lost his life in 1697 by a fall in endeavoring to secure a coveted plant. The motto adopted by a lamented friend, the late Thomas Hicks Wynne, as that of his valuable serial "*Documents Relating to the Old Dominion*"—"Gather up the fragments that remain"—I would, young gentlemen, earnestly commend to you.

In the Smithsonian Institution there is an invaluable collection of documents illustrating the history of prices in England from 1650 to 1750, bound in fifty-four large volumes, which were presented, in 1852, by J. Orchard Halliwell, the eminent antiquarian and Shakesperian annotator. There is a way, young gentlemen, in which you may not only enrich the museum of your *Alma Mater*, but contribute importantly to historical investigation. Gather assiduously, in the sections of your homes, severally, all that may be gleaned of old documents, letters, diaries, account-books, newspapers, household utensils, and aboriginal implements, and deposit them here for the information of the curious and the student.

Inspection of old accounts and newspapers have afforded me much curious information as to the habits, dress, concomitants, and amusements of colonial Virginians.

The advertisements in the Williamsburg (Va.) *Gazette* of 1773 and 1774 indicate a degree of luxurious living in our ancestors which is vouchsafed to but few of us now. Think of Bengal silks, scarlet plushes, Irish linens, silver clasps, buckles, and buttons, bag and tie wigs, and a multitude of laces and ribbons; of the tipples chocolate, coffee, pimento, and Bohea tea; of Canary, Lisbon, Madeira, Malaga, Malmsey, Rhenish, Teneriffe, and Tokay wines, irrespective of other cheering spirits. There was sugar—brown, refined, loaf, and Muscovado. The social and inspiring musical instruments were the violin and the spinet.

Among professionals and artisans who served were physicians, surgeons, and dentists, wig-makers, hair-drapers, tailors, goldsmiths, clock and watch makers, cuttlers, carvers, and gilders, herald and coach-painters, coach and chair-makers, saddlers, makers of mattresses of curled English hair, and weavers of damasks, gauzes, figured cottons, and counterpanes.

Governor Spotswood notes as early as 1718 an amateur dramatic performance on the occasion of the celebration of the anniversary of the birthday of George I on May 1st, and there were frequent representations, and more than one "play-house," in Williamsburg before the Revolution.

But the exemplification of the Virginian—mental, moral, martial, political and social—might not be exhausted in a series of descriptive lectures.

Professor Richard H. Greene, of Columbia College, New York

in his "*Alumni of the Earlier American Colleges Who Have Held Official Positions*," awards the first distinction in point of number and exalted position to our own venerable and potential William and Mary College. She leads with three of the fourteen Presidents who have been graduates of American colleges—Jefferson, Monroe and Tyler. (Virginia furnished also Madison and Harrison, as you are aware.)

There have been fifteen United States Cabinet officers, a chief and three associate justices of the United States Supreme Court, one lieutenant-general United States army, fourteen United States envoys and ministers, eighty-four United States senators and representatives in Congress, sixty judges of the United States District, Circuit and State Courts, three presidents of colleges, and twenty-three governors of States.⁴³ Dr. Thomas Nelson Page, in his able address on "The History of the South," delivered before the Alumni Society of the University of Virginia in Louisville, Ky., April 13th last, thus eloquently invokes the coming expositor of the South :

"If any one aspire to do his country this service, let him arise. He need not fear for his reward. To such an one I would say that he must have at once the instinct of the historian and the wisdom of the philosopher. He must possess the talisman that shall discover truth amid all the heaps of falsehood, though they be piled upon it like Pelion on Ossa. He must have the sagacity to detect the evil in every manifestation of the civilization he shall chronicle, though it be gleaming with the gilding of romance. He must have the fortitude to resist all temptations to deviate by so much as a hair's breadth from the absolute, the inexorable fact, not if the angel should attempt to beguile him. He must know and tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help him God !

"For such an one Fame waits to take him in her arms."

Young gentlemen, brother students, this just apotheosis is a practicality.

I would fain hope that among you it may find realization in patriotic illustration of your own grand old State, if not of the sisterhood of the Sunny South.

⁴³ New York, 1890, reprinted from the *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*.

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